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**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1 A method for providing a mailing list test service involving a plurality of mailing  
2 lists, each mailing list including information about a plurality of list members, the  
3 method comprising:

- 4 (a) sending, for each mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, an e-  
5 mail message to each of a subset of list members;  
6 (b) receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail  
7 message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list  
8 member from a subset of list members; and  
9 (c) selecting for use, based on the at least one response received in (b),  
10 one of the plurality of mailing lists.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

- 2 (d) selling the mailing list selected in (c).

3 3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

- 4 (d) renting to another the mailing list selected in (c).

5 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

- 6 (d) mailing information to list members of the mailing list selected in  
7 (c).

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said sending an e-mail message in (a) includes:

- 2 (i) sending, for a first mailing list in the plurality of  
3 mailing lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of the subset;  
4 and

- 5 (ii) sending, for the first mailing list in the plurality of  
6 mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second member of the  
7 subset

8 wherein the first e-mail message includes content different from the second e-mail  
9 message.

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1      6.

The method of claim 5, further comprising:

- 2
- (d) storing the at least one response received in (b).

1      7. The method of claim 5, wherein at least one of the plurality of mailing lists  
2 contains a first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of mailing  
3 lists contains a second set of content, and wherein said selecting in (c) includes  
4 selecting at least one of the plurality of mailing lists based on mailing list content  
5 included in the e-mail messages sent in (a).

1      8. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one response received in (b) includes,  
2 for each received response, a test identifier and a member identifier, and comprising the  
3 further steps of:

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- (d) retrieving a test record from a test database based on the received  
test identifier; and
- (e) updating the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the received  
member identifier, that a response was received from a member associated  
with the member identifier.

1      9. The method of claim 8, wherein the at least one response received in (b) further  
2 includes a question identifier and an answer identifier.

1      10. The method of claim 7, wherein said selecting one of the plurality of mailing lists  
2 includes selecting based on the received question identifier and the received  
3 answer identifier.

1      11. The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting one of the plurality of mailing lists  
2 includes:

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- (i) determining a response rate of each of the plurality  
of mailing lists; and
- (ii) selecting the mailing list that has a response rate  
higher than the response rates of the other mailing lists.

~~The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail message includes detecting a response to the e-mail message based on the use of a uniform resource locator embedded in the e-mail message.~~

1 13. The method of claim 1, wherein a list member associated with a received response  
2 is compensated for the response.

An apparatus for providing a mailing list test service, comprising:

- (a) a processor;
  - (b) a database including a plurality of mailing lists, each mailing list having information about a plurality of list members;
  - (c) a port coupled to said processor; and
  - (d) a memory including a database, said memory coupled to said processor, and said memory storing instructions adapted to be executed by said processor, the instructions including:
    - (i) sending, for each mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, an e-mail message to each of a subset of list members;
    - (ii) receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list member from a subset of list members; and
    - (iii) selecting for use, based on the at least one response received in (b), one of the plurality of mailing lists.

1 15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said memory stores further instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor, said further instructions including:  
3 (iv) selling the mailing list selected in (iii).

1 16. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said memory stores further instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor, said further instructions including:  
3 (iv) renting to another the mailing list selected in (iii).

1 17. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said memory stores further instructions

adapted to be executed by said processor, said further instructions including:

(iv) mailing information to members of the mailing list

selected in (iii).

- 1 18. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the instructions to send an e-mail message  
2 include instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to:  
3     send, for a first mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, a first e-mail  
4 message to a first member of the subset; and  
5     send, for the first mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, a second e-mail  
6 message to a second member of the subset, wherein the first e-mail message  
7 includes content different from the second e-mail message.

1 19. The apparatus of claim 18, said memory storing further instructions adapted to be  
2 executed by said processor, the instructions including:  
3     (iv)     storing the at least one response received in (ii).

1 20. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein one of the plurality of mailing lists contains a  
2 first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of mailing lists contains  
3 a second set of mailing list content, and wherein selecting in (iii) includes selecting  
4 one of the plurality of mailing lists based on mailing list content included in the e-  
5 mail messages sent in (i).

1 21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein selecting in (iii) further includes:  
2     (i)     determining a response rate of each of the plurality  
3                 of mailing lists; and  
4     (ii)     selecting a mailing list from the plurality of mailing  
5                 lists that has a response rate higher than the response rate of the  
6                 other mailing lists.

1 22. The apparatus of claim 13, said database including a mailing list database  
2 containing a member identifier, a test database containing a test identifier, a  
3 questions database, an answer database, and said memory storing further

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4  
5 instructions adapted to be executed on said processor, the further instructions  
6 including:

- 7 (iv) retrieving a test record from the test database based  
8 on a received test identifier; and  
9 (v) marking the retrieved test record to disclose, based  
10 on the member identifier, that a response was received from a list  
member associated with the member identifier.

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- 1 23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the test database contains a question identifier  
2 and an answer identifier.
- 1 24. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein instructions to select a mailing list from the  
2 plurality of mailing lists include instructions to:  
3 determine the response rate of each of the plurality of mailing lists; and  
4 select the mailing list with the highest response rate.
- 1 25. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein said receiving at least one response based on  
2 an associated e-mail message includes detecting a response to the e-mail message  
3 based on the use of a URL embedded in the e-mail message.
- 1 26. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein a list member associated with a received  
2 response is compensated for the response.
- 1 27. A medium storing instruction adapted to be executed by a processor to provide a  
2 mailing list test service for a plurality of mailing lists, each mailing list including  
3 information about a plurality of list members, said instructions comprising:  
4 (a) sending, for each mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, an e-  
5 mail message to each of a subset of list members;  
6 (b) receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail  
7 message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list  
8 member from a subset of list members; and  
9 (c) selecting for use, based on the at least one response received in (b),

- 10                         one of the plurality of mailing lists.
- 1                         28. The medium of claim 27 storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a  
2                         processor, said further instructions comprising:  
3                         (d) selling the mailing list selected in (c).
- 1                         29. The medium of claim 27 storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a  
2                         processor, said further instructions comprising:  
3                         (d) renting to another the mailing list selected in (c).
- 1                         30. The medium of claim 27 storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a  
2                         processor, said further instructions comprising:  
3                         (d) mailing information to members of the mailing list selected in (c).
- 1                         31. The medium of claim 27, wherein the instructions to send an e-mail message in (a)  
2                         include further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to:  
3                         (i) send, for a first mailing list in the plurality of mailing  
4                         lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of the subset; and  
5                         (ii) send, for the first mailing list in the plurality of  
6                         mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second member of the  
7                         subset,  
8                         wherein the first e-mail message includes content different from the second e-mail  
9                         message.
- 1                         32. The medium of claim 31, said medium storing further instructions adapted to be  
2                         executed by a processor to store the at least one response received in (b).
- 1                         33. The medium of claim 31, wherein one of the plurality of mailing lists contains a  
2                         first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of mailing lists contains  
3                         a second set of content, and wherein said selecting in (c) includes selecting one of  
4                         the plurality of mailing lists based on mailing list content in the e-mail messages  
5                         sent in (a).

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- 1 34. The medium of claim 33, wherein said selecting in (c) further includes:

2 (i) determining a response rate of each of the plurality

3 of mailing lists; and

4 (ii) selecting the mailing list that has a response rate

5 higher than the response rate of the other mailing lists.

1 35. The medium of claim 27, wherein the response received in (b) includes, for each

2 received response, a test identifier and a member identifier , and wherein the

3 medium includes further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, said

4 further instructions comprising:

5 (d) retrieving a test record from a test database based on the received

6 test identifier; and

7 (e) marking the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the received

8 member identifier, that a response was received from a member associated

9 with the member identifier.

1 36. The medium of claim 35, wherein said instructions to receive a response to the e-

2 mail message include instructions to:

3 (i) receive a question identifier; and

4 (ii) receive an answer identifier.

1 37. The medium of claim 36, wherein the selection in (c) includes selecting based on

2 the received question identifier and the received answer identifier.

1 38. The medium of claim 27, wherein said instructions to select a mailing list include

2 instructions to:

3 (i) determine the response rate of each of the plurality of

4 mailing lists; and

5 (ii) select the mailing list that has the highest response

6 rate.

1 39. A system for providing a mailing list test service involving a plurality of mailing

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lists, each mailing list including information about a plurality of list members, the system comprising:

- (a) means for sending, for each mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, an e-mail message to each of a subset of list members;
- (b) means for receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list member from a subset of list members; and
- (c) means for selecting for use, based on the at least one response received in (b), one of the plurality of mailing lists.

40. The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- (d) means for selling the mailing list selected in (c).

41. The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- (d) means for renting to another the mailing list selected in (c).

42. The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- (d) means for mailing information to list members of the mailing list selected in (c).

43. The system of claim 39, wherein said means for sending an e-mail message in (a) includes:

- (i) means for sending, for a first mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of the subset; and
- (ii) means for sending, for the first mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second member of the subset, wherein the first e-mail message includes content different from the second e-mail message.

44. The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- (d) means for storing the at least one response.

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- 1 45. The system of claim 44, wherein one of the plurality of mailing lists contains a first  
2 set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of mailing lists contains a  
3 second set of mailing list content, and wherein said means for selecting includes  
4 means for selecting one of the plurality of mailing lists based on mailing list  
5 content included in sent computer based messages.
- 1 46. The system of claim 45, wherein said means for selecting further includes:  
2 (i) means for determining a response rate of each of the  
3 plurality of mailing lists; and  
4 (ii) means for selecting the mailing list that has a  
5 response rate higher than the response rate of the other mailing lists  
6 of the plurality of mailing lists.
- 1 47. The system of claim 39, wherein the at least one response received in (b) includes,  
2 for each received response, a test identifier and a member identifier, and further  
3 comprising:  
4 (d) means for retrieving a test record from a test database based on the  
5 received test identifier; and  
6 (e) means for marking the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the  
7 received member identifier, that a response was received from a member  
8 associated with the member identifier.
- 1 48. The system of claim 47, wherein the at least one response received in (b) further  
2 includes a question identifier and an answer identifier.
- 1 49. The system of claim 48, wherein said means for selecting one of the plurality of  
2 mailing lists includes means for selecting based on the received question identifier  
3 and the received answer identifier.
- 1 50. The system of claim 49, wherein said means for selecting one of the plurality of  
2 mailing lists includes:  
3 (i) means for determining a response rate of each of the

plurality of mailing lists; and

(ii) means for selecting the mailing list that has the highest response rate.

51. A method for creating a custom mailing list, comprising:

- (a) receiving preselected criteria;
  - (b) sending an e-mail message to a plurality of recipients;
  - (c) receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail message, each received message being associated with one of the plurality of recipients; and
  - (d) creating, based on the at least one response received in (c) and the preselected criteria received in (a), a mailing list.

52. The method of claim 51, wherein the preselected criteria received in (a) includes a response rate.

53. The method of claim 51, wherein the e-mail message sent in (b) is a telephone message.

54. The method of claim 51, wherein the at least one response received in (c) includes a test identifier and a member identifier.

55. The method of claim 51, wherein the at least one response received in (c) includes a question identifier and an answer identifier.

1 56. A method for customizing message content, comprising:

- (a) receiving list criteria;
  - (b) sending an e-mail message to a plurality of recipients;
  - (c) receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail message, each received message being associated with one of the plurality of recipients; and

(d) choosing, for a mailing list, message content based on the at least one response received in (c), and the list criteria received in (a).

1 57. The method of claim 56, wherein the list criteria received in (a) includes a response  
2 rate.

1 58. The method of claim 56, wherein the at least one response received in (c) includes  
2 a test identifier and a member identifier.

1 59. The method of claim 56, wherein the at least one response received in (c) includes  
2 a question identifier and an answer identifier.